

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary  
445 12th Street, SW  
Room TW-A325  
Washington, DC 20554

Received & Inspected

NOV 27 2012

FCC Mail Room

CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

I am writing in response to the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) request for comments on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates." I am opposed to the changes being considered.

VRS has created a more level playing field for people like me who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, empowering us to communicate via videophone with anyone at any time in our native language, American Sign Language. The nature of the work I do requires that I be able to use the phone to communicate with colleagues, clients and business associates regardless of whether they are hearing or deaf. Without reliable, high-quality VRS service I would not be able to do my job effectively.

The changes the FCC is considering would drastically change the nature of the VRS I depend on. One of the aspects of VRS that makes it such an effective way to communicate is the quality of the videophone technology used and the fact that the products provided by VRS companies have been developed specifically with the needs of the deaf – my needs – in mind. Yet, the FCC is considering changes that would, instead, force us to use off-the-shelf products and government-mandated software. Using products developed by and for people who are hearing would be a huge step backwards! The FCC cannot consider this to be a reasonable replacement for the high quality, specialized VRS technology we use every day.

The rate changes being considered by the FCC would also directly affect my ability to access VRS, as well as the reliability and quality of service I depend on. If the FCC slashes the rates paid to VRS providers, as suggested in its Public Notice, many companies will simply stop providing this essential service. This will put me and all members of the deaf community at a significant disadvantage.

In my view, VRS today is a shining example of what Congress intended when it passed the Americans with Disabilities Act 22 years ago. It is absolutely essential that any changes to the current program maintain the access, innovation and reliability that define VRS today.

Sincerely,

Name Rita J Neal

Title, if appropriate —

Address P.O. Box 416 Mt. Gilead OH 43338

Telephone Number 516-393-5486

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I hope the FCC has answers to all of the questions before it considers changing the current system.

Sincerely,

Name Rita J Neal

Title, if appropriate —

Address P.O. Box 4116 Mt. Gilead OH 43338

Telephone Number 5167-393-5486

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I am alarmed that the FCC is proposing to dramatically change the VRS program. Why is the FCC going out of its way to fix something that isn't broken?

I think there are two crucial reasons to keep the current VRS system in place.

First, I like the company I do business with. I don't want to be forced to switch companies because the one I work with has gone out of business.

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The VRS program works for people who are deaf. It's how we communicate every day with the hearing world and how the hearing world communicates with us. Any changes to the program must be in the best interest of deaf Americans. The changes being considered by the FCC are not.

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Name Rita J Neal

Title, if appropriate —

Address P.O. Box 416 Mt. Gilead OH 43338

Telephone Number 567-393-5486

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If the FCC takes away skilled ASL interpreters and innovative equipment, VRS as we know it today won't exist. This would be a huge step backward for the rights and opportunities of Americans who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

Sincerely,

Name Kimberly Oney

Title, if appropriate \_\_\_\_\_

Address 3677 W. 102nd St Cleveland, OH 44111

Telephone Number 216 337 9407

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Sincerely,

Name Sandra J Ridenour

Title, if appropriate \_\_\_\_\_

Address 1045 Maple Ave. Miamiburg, Ohio 45342

Telephone Number 937-353-1140

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I hope the FCC has answers to all of the questions before it considers changing the current system.

Sincerely,

Name

Sandra J. Ridensow

Title, if appropriate

Address

1045 Maple Ave. Miamisburg, Ohio 45342

Telephone Number

937-353-1140

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I am a deaf person who uses Video Relay Services (VRS) for my communication with hearing people. VRS is a communication tool I use every day.

I am writing because I am very concerned about the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC's) recent proposals to change the way VRS works. I can't imagine life without the current services I use. I don't want to see those services change!

The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) moved deaf people forward and opened up opportunities for us. The ADA assured deaf people (like me) that we will have access to "functionally-equivalent" communication – communication choices and services similar to those enjoyed by hearing people. To date, Video Relay Service (VRS) is the most functionally-equivalent communication service for deaf people.

I am concerned that if the FCC's proposals go into effect, I won't have what the ADA promised me – choice in my VRS equipment. I want to keep options available in choosing products that were designed for deaf people. I want choices.

I am concerned that if the FCC's proposals go into effect, I won't have a choice in my VRS provider. I don't want my calls to be routed through a centralized database that would assign my calls to different providers. Hearing people have a choice in service providers. I want a choice.

I am concerned that if the FCC's proposals go into effect and there are rate cuts for VRS providers, the quality of my service will suffer. I'm concerned that with very limited resources, VRS providers might have to make changes that would result in longer hold times and unreliable service. Hearing people have a choice to choose quality service. I don't want VRS quality to suffer because VRS providers have no choice but to cut aspects of their service.

Please fulfill the promises of the ADA! I want functional equivalency. I want choices – in equipment, providers and quality. Please ensure that the VRS services I currently enjoy are maintained. PLEASE SO!!

Sincerely,

Name: *RAMONA B. M'CLELLAND*

Title: *HOMEMAKER*

Address: *2311 LONDON BRIDGE DR SILVER SPRING MD 20906*

Telephone Number: *301 598-7512*

By signing this document, you are filing an official FCC proceeding. All information submitted, including names and addresses, will be publicly available via the web.

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Sincerely,

Name

Title, if appropriate

Address

1045 MAPLE AVE., MIAMI BEACH FL 33139

Telephone Number

937-353-1140

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Name



Title, if appropriate

Address 1045 MAPLE AVE, MIAMI BEACH, OH 45342

Telephone Number 937-353-1140

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The FCC has also suggested that VRS can be just as effectively provided through government-mandated software that is used on off-the-shelf equipment like common videophones, computers, the iPad, or a smart TV. While such equipment can provide a convenient backup solution, it can't replace the videophones and other technologies provided by VRS providers. These have been specifically designed to take into account the special needs of the deaf and hard-of-hearing.

If the FCC takes away skilled ASL interpreters and innovative equipment, VRS as we know it today won't exist. This would be a huge step backward for the rights and opportunities of Americans who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

Sincerely,

Name Michael Wright

Title, if appropriate —

Address P.O. Box 4116 Mt. Gilead, Ohio 43338

Telephone Number 419-560-8595

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Sincerely,

Name

*Kristy J Nunley*

Title, if appropriate

Address

*2349 Waterpointe Ct Cols, Ohio 43209*

Telephone Number

*614-556-4678*

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Sincerely,

Name Christina Helgers

Title, if appropriate \_\_\_\_\_

Address 3015 Deer Pk. W. Rapids WI 54484

Telephone Number 715 952 5772

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Sincerely,

Name Dianne Fazl

Title, if appropriate \_\_\_\_\_

Address 2117 W. 83<sup>rd</sup> St Cleveland, Ohio 44102

Telephone Number 216-370-7673

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11/29/12

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Sincerely,

Name Dianne Fazz

Title, if appropriate \_\_\_\_\_

Address 2117 W. 83 St Cleve., Ohio 44102

Telephone Number 216-370-7673

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Sincerely,

Name Diane Fazz

Title, if appropriate \_\_\_\_\_

Address 2117 W, 83 St Cleveland, Ohio 44102

Telephone Number 216-870-7673

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Sincerely,

Name Donna Ice (Hearing)

Title, if appropriate \_\_\_\_\_

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FCC Mail Room

CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

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Sincerely,

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Title, if appropriate Retired

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Sincerely,

Name Keely Rask

Title, if appropriate Student

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Telephone Number 763-783-7824

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Sincerely,

Name Brad Carlson

Title, if appropriate Network Engineer

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Sincerely,

Name Kendra Rask

Title, if appropriate Teacher

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Telephone Number 612-270-8675

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Sincerely,

Name Brandon Matis

Title, if appropriate student

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Telephone Number 763-783-7824

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CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

FCC Mail Room

I am writing to provide my comments on Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) Public Notice on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates."

I am deaf and VRS is how I stay in touch with my family and friends who are not deaf. I'm sure that hearing people don't think about what it means to be able to pick up the phone and call anyone any time or anywhere they want. But for me, this means everything. VRS has changed my life.

I am alarmed that the FCC is proposing to dramatically change the VRS program. Why is the FCC going out of its way to fix something that isn't broken?

I think there are two crucial reasons to keep the current VRS system in place.

First, I like the company I do business with. I don't want to be forced to switch companies because the one I work with has gone out of business.

Second, I don't want to have to buy and set up my own VRS equipment. I got my equipment at no cost from my VRS provider. They installed it and continue to maintain it. It would be unfair to now shift this burden to me and other deaf people. If the government wants to prevent deaf people from connecting with others and using VRS, this is a good way to do it.

The VRS program works for people who are deaf. It's how we communicate every day with the hearing world and how the hearing world communicates with us. Any changes to the program must be in the best interest of deaf Americans. The changes being considered by the FCC are not.

Sincerely,

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Title, if appropriate Retired

Address 4020 Cleveland St NE, Col. Hgts, MN 55421

Telephone Number 612-424-4938

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I am writing in response to the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC's) request for comments on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates." I am very concerned about these proposals and how they will affect my family's safety.

VRS is a lifeline. It allows me to conduct business, connect with my family and friends and do many other things over the phone that many hearing people take for granted. Most important, though, VRS is how I access my local emergency 911 service. In an emergency I know that when I place a 911 call it will be answered immediately. My location will be known. And, specially trained American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters will be there to make sure my local emergency responders know exactly what help I need. You can't imagine how frightening it is to think that I might not be able to get help for me or my family because of long hold times, poorly trained interpreters, or bad equipment.

Cutting the rates paid to VRS providers as low as the FCC proposes will only reduce service quality I currently depend on. How will these companies hire and keep skilled ASL interpreters on staff when the government has just cut what they are willing to pay them by \$2 an hour? How will 911 calls be answered immediately when there are fewer interpreters and longer hold times? How will I know that my VRS will work when I'm using a videophone from WalMart instead of the specially designed videophone from my VRS provider?

I hope the FCC has answers to all of the questions before it considers changing the current system.

Sincerely,

Name Karen M. Jernab

Title, if appropriate Retired

Address 4020 Cleveland St NE, Col. Hgts, Ma 05421

Telephone Number 612-424-4938

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Sincerely,

Name CATHERINE M. SINDELAR *Catherine M. Sindelar*

Title, if appropriate \_\_\_\_\_

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FCC Mail Room

CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

I am writing in response to the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) request for comments on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates." I am opposed to the changes being considered.

VRS has created a more level playing field for people like me who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, empowering us to communicate via videophone with anyone at any time in our native language, American Sign Language. The nature of the work I do requires that I be able to use the phone to communicate with colleagues, clients and business associates regardless of whether they are hearing or deaf. Without reliable, high-quality VRS service I would not be able to do my job effectively.

The changes the FCC is considering would drastically change the nature of the VRS I depend on. One of the aspects of VRS that makes it such an effective way to communicate is the quality of the videophone technology used and the fact that the products provided by VRS companies have been developed specifically with the needs of the deaf – my needs – in mind. Yet, the FCC is considering changes that would, instead, force us to use off-the-shelf products and government-mandated software. Using products developed by and for people who are hearing would be a huge step backwards! The FCC cannot consider this to be a reasonable replacement for the high quality, specialized VRS technology we use every day.

The rate changes being considered by the FCC would also directly affect my ability to access VRS, as well as the reliability and quality of service I depend on. If the FCC slashes the rates paid to VRS providers, as suggested in its Public Notice, many companies will simply stop providing this essential service. This will put me and all members of the deaf community at a significant disadvantage.

In my view, VRS today is a shining example of what Congress intended when it passed the Americans with Disabilities Act 22 years ago. It is absolutely essential that any changes to the current program maintain the access, innovation and reliability that define VRS today.

Sincerely,

Name

Lisa Williams

Title, if appropriate \_\_\_\_\_

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